



LIFELINK

NEWSLETTER

Page 1

Stress Navigation Plan
Summer Pledge
News You Can Use

Page 2

LifeLink Spotlight
Resilience Corner

Page 3

Keeping up with Shipmates
Upcoming Events
News You Can Use

WHAT'S YOUR PLAN TO NAVIGATE STRESS?

As the days get longer and warmer and summer excitement begins, safety will be a critical focus—from preventing mishaps in swimming pools and outdoor grilling dangers, to preventing fatigued driving during summer road trips. Naval Safety Center's "[Live to Play, Play to Live](#)" campaign is in full-swing, with several Navy programs engaging to ensure that the entire community enjoys the next 101 days of summer safely and responsibly.

While planning for physical safety helps minimize risk for yourself and those around you, emotional safety and wellbeing is an equally important part of the equation to keep you healthy and mission-ready. We may not know when we'll encounter adversity, but by identifying positive resources that we can turn to during life's inevitable challenges we can help prepare ourselves for the unexpected, minimizing the risk of those challenges developing into crises. Just as you would program a sober buddy's number in your phone to avoid getting behind the wheel after consuming alcohol, you should take a moment to proactively identify who you'd reach out to and what you will do when you encounter stress and adversity.

To help you explore and identify your resources for making healthy decisions during stressful times, take a moment to fill out your Stress Navigation Plan, downloadable on the Navy Suicide Prevention website [here](#). This simple proactive tool helps you think about your current practices for navigating stress—from a tough day on the job, to financial setbacks or relationship issues—while you're still emotionally healthy. In the process, you may come up with more positive ways to navigate stress than what you currently turn to and will have the names and numbers of those you trust when you need to talk things through. By writing your resources and practices down now, you'll be more prepared during stressful situations and are empowering yourself to make positive choices to thrive during adversity, not just survive.

While you're encouraged to share your [Stress Navigation Plan](#) with your closest friends, family or those who are listed in it, your plan doesn't have to be shared with anyone. Keep it in a safe place (wallet, desk, glove compartment in your car) so that you can easily access it when the need arises. You can even take a picture of your plan and store it in your mobile phone, or save the phone numbers in your contacts list. This is a simple commitment to yourself to navigate stress safely and to remind yourself that seeking help—whether through a friend, peer, leader or professional resource—can help you emerge from adversity stronger and more resilient than before. Be sure to update your plan every few months so that you're not just ready for stress during the 101 days of summer, but all year long.



Click above to take the Summer Pledge to drink responsibly and Keep What You've Earned.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

21st Century Sailor Office:
Where We've Been, Where
We're Going [Navy Live](#)

Take the Pledge to Drink
Responsibly this Summer
[Navy Live](#)

Reaching Out for Help:
That's True Strength
[Real Warriors](#)

PTSD Awareness Month
[VA.gov](#)

Prescription for Discharge
[All Hands Magazine](#)

LIFELINK NEWSLETTER

LIFELINK SPOTLIGHT

Chief Jeromy Kelsey

More often when we read about suicide in the media, the focus is on those who were lost. Rarely do we hear the courageous stories of those who survived. This month's LifeLink Spotlight is awarded to Chief Aircrew Survival Equipmentman Jeromy Kelsey, a suicide attempt survivor, for his dedicated and tireless efforts to inspire hope and strength for Sailors in times of adversity.

PRC Kelsey attempted suicide as a petty officer second class, following a downward spiral that began in his childhood. After years of silence, he began sharing his story with others in an effort to address some of the common perceptions regarding seeking help for psychological issues, hoping to save a career—or a life. Kelsey recently sat down with [NavyTimes](#) as a part of this effort. In his interview, he details the various factors that led him to believe “his life was too far gone.” From sexual abuse, to broken relationships, isolation, sleeplessness, substance abuse and ultimately a loss of hope, Chief Kelsey depicts the realities of many suicides: there isn't a single root or cause. Suicide is often the result of several issues or stressors, and although the combination may seem overwhelming, Kelsey wants Sailors to know that seeking help works and it doesn't have to be career-ending. His commanding officer stood by him during his recovery, when Kelsey admitted that he didn't want to die or leave the Navy, he just needed help.

Thirteen years later, following support from his Navy leaders and peers, as well as professionals, Chief Kelsey has gone on to thrive in his Navy career as a seasoned leader. He is now helping the [21st Century Sailor Office](#) carry the message that seeking help is a sign of strength by traveling to speak at Personal Readiness Summits. He's also recorded a [testimonial video](#) that is widely used for command training and awareness efforts. “I only wish I'd gotten help earlier,” he tells NavyTimes. Read the full article in the May 19 print issue.

The LifeLink Spotlight recognizes a proactive Sailor, command, or member of the Navy community that has gone above and beyond to help others thrive, not just survive. Whether sharing an inspiring personal testimony, organizing efforts to promote wellness and resilience, or taking ACTions that save a life, spotlight awardees offer hope and build a sense of community—protective factors against suicide and other destructive behaviors. Send your nominations to suicideprevention@navy.mil.

RESILIENCE CORNER

LifeLink Celebrates its Second Birthday

This month marks the 24th issue of LifeLink newsletter. Over the past two years, LifeLink's audience has grown from existing and newly trained command Suicide Prevention Coordinator (SPCs), to ombudsmen, chaplains, unit leaders, medical staff, fleet and family support centers and even command triads. LifeLink aims to put the latest suicide prevention and stress navigation news and resources at the fingertips of those who can carry the message at deckplate. From the feature articles describing ways to build and strengthen resilience to the inspiring stories that make it into each month's LifeLink spotlight, the newsletter is here as a resource to help you enable your shipmates to thrive, not just survive.

We've received some very helpful feedback over the past two years and have seen great examples of how to use LifeLink to promote more educated, proactive and supportive commands when it comes to psychological health. To that end, here are a few best practices employed by your fellow SPCs and LifeLink subscribers to maintain an actively engaged command suicide prevention program:

- Repurpose the *News You Can Use* links for use on your command's social media page to promote awareness among Sailors and their families.
- Send a bi-weekly "e-gram" to unit leaders and your command triad highlighting one or two of the four LifeLink features (front page feature, *Resilience Corner*, *LifeLink Spotlight*, back page feature) to promote engaged leadership.
- Post each month's issue in high-visibility areas, like break rooms and fitness spaces, for your shipmates to read.
- Include the LifeLink features and news resources in your Plan of the Week (POW).
- Keep a running list of the major topics covered in each issue to refer back to when it's time to prepare for your command's annual Suicide Prevention GMT or other health promotion event (and have copies available for distribution).

In addition to the above ways to utilize LifeLink, as an SPC, use it as a tool to increase your own knowledge and skills regarding everyday ways to prevent suicide. Use it as a tool to start a conversation—or keep the conversation going—about stress and psychological health among your shipmates. Open discussion is one of the best ways to counter the negative perceptions about stress and suicide, and encourage all that seeking help is a sign of strength.

Thank you for all that you do for your shipmates to help them thrive, not just survive. Please continue to provide us your feedback about the newsletter or other Navy Suicide Prevention Program resources.

Missed an issue? View the LifeLink archives [here](#).

LIFELINK NEWSLETTER



UPCOMING EVENTS

**National Safety
Month**
June

**PTSD Awareness
Month**
June

**SPC Basic Training
Webinar**
June 11
June 26
[Register Here!](#)

***Make safety your
priority for July 4th
travel. Use TRiPs!***

Contact Navy Suicide Prevention

[Email Us](#) | [Website](#)

Follow Operational Stress

Control Online...



PCS SEASON IS HERE—KEEP UP WITH YOUR SHIPMATES

Many Sailors are preparing for upcoming Personal Change of Station (PCS) moves this summer, a transition that can bring about as much stress as it does excitement. Transitions can mean disruption to daily routines and separation from one's social/support network (think exhausting and isolating cross-country drives for a PCS move, or transferring as a geobachelor). Even for experienced PCS pros who are eagerly awaiting the next chapter in their career and life, moves can be tough—particularly when they're occurring during an otherwise stressful time.



While our shipmates may seem to have it all under control on the outside, it's important to remain vigilant and pay attention to even the smallest signals that something isn't right, particularly as they're leaving a familiar environment and are heading to a new one. You may know bits and pieces about a shipmate's life outside of the work center—relationship or family tension, financial issues, apprehension about career changes, etc.—but may feel as though you don't know enough to get involved. Even though your buddy may casually dismiss his or her problems, or may not discuss them at length, reach out and offer your support and encourage him or her to speak with someone, perhaps a chaplain or trusted leader, before the situation becomes overwhelming. The likelihood of making a bad decision is higher when a person is in transition, so identifying resources early is vital to keeping your shipmate healthy and mission-ready.

If you notice anything out of the norm for your shipmate, break the silence and speak with others who know him or her well—a unit leader, roommate, family member or friend. They may have noticed the same cues or observed some that you weren't aware of, helping to “connect the dots” and facilitate the intervention process. While you may not be able to tell if your shipmate is or isn't in crisis on your own, by openly communicating to piece things together, you're helping to ensure that your buddy has resources in place to help him or her build resilience and thrive in their next phase in life.

Ongoing communication is critical. Once your shipmate has checked out of your command, don't lose track of him or her. Ensure that you have his or her accurate contact information, ask about upcoming plans, and check-in on them often. Remind your shipmate that they're still a part of your family and that you care about their wellbeing. Preventing suicide starts by being there for every Sailor, every day—no matter where they are.

MORE NEWS YOU CAN USE

Case Study: Boone Medical Clinic and PTSD Awareness
[Military Pathways](#)

Mental Health Care Services Connect to Serve More
Efficiently [Military Spot](#)

Alcohol and PTSD: a Spouse's Story [Military Pathways](#)

A Place to Call Home [All Hands Magazine](#)

How to Stay Connected while Miles Apart [Real Warriors](#)

Is this Behavior Normal? 5 Tips for the Concerned Military
Spouse [DCoE Blog](#)

Assert Yourself and be Heard [HPRC](#)

Calm in Chaos [Stennis 74 Blog](#)

Building Summer Fun into Your PCS [Military OneSource](#)

Summer Driving Safety [NMCPhC](#)